

## **Your Family, Bottled Water, and Your Teeth**

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Is your family one of the many families that relies on bottled water as a primary source of drinking water? If so, Please take a moment to read this very important information.

Bottled water often does not have fluoride added to it. Or, if it has been purified through reverse osmosis or distillation, the fluoride may have been removed. The majority of bottled waters on the market do not contain optimal levels (0.7-1.2 ppm) of fluoride. And, some types of home water treatment systems can reduce the fluoride levels in water supplies potentially decreasing the decay-preventive effects of optimally fluoridated water. People who drink mostly bottled water, especially those who have children, need to be aware of this. They may need to use supplemental fluoride that is available by prescription from dentists or doctors. The supplements are usually recommended for children ages 7 to 16. Fluoride supplements are inexpensive and cost around \$15 for a three-month supply.

The IBWA, International Bottled Water Association says there are more than 20 brands of bottled water with added fluoride available to consumers today. When fluoride is added to bottled water, the FDA requires that the term "fluoridated," "fluoride added," or "with added fluoride" be used on the label. It is still very important for you to know how much fluoride bottled water contains. You can usually find that out by contacting individual companies directly.

From a regulatory standpoint, the FDA describes bottled water as water that is intended for human consumption and that is sealed in bottles or other containers with no added ingredients, except that it may contain a safe and suitable antimicrobial agent. Fluoride may also be added within the limits set by the FDA.

It really pays to do your homework.

Sources and more information:

U.S. Food and Drug Administration, <http://www.fda.gov/>

American Dental Association, <http://www.ada.org/>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/dwinfo/ca.htm>

Contact EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

If you have more questions regarding this article or any other general dental health related questions, please feel free to call me at 510-796-1656.

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